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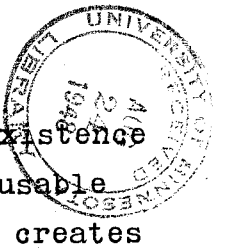

CIVIL LIBERTIES AND COMMUNIST CONSPIRACY

by William Henry Chamberlin

In considering how to deal with the issue raised by the existence of world Communist conspiracy, Americans are in a state of excusable schizophrenia. The conspiracy is an indisputable fact, and it creates a situation with no parallel in world history. From the moment when Lenin and his party seized power in Russia in November, 1917, Moscow has been the center of a systematically organized attempt to overthrow non-Communist governments throughout the world.

This has been one of the most open conspiracies in history; the documentation from the writings of Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin and other recognized Soviet leaders is enormous. It has not been a paper conspiracy. Strings pulled from Moscow have exploded riots, strikes, insurrections, and civil strife, literally from China to Peru.

The Communist International, founded in Moscow in March, 1919, as an association of all the Communist parties in the world, was based on the principle of strictest centralization and discipline. Identification of the Soviet Government with the Communist International, which avowedly aimed at the overthrow of "bourgeois", or non-Communist, governments throughout the world -- by any means legal or illegal -- has been of the closest character.

In Russia the ruling Communist Party and the Soviet Government function as an interlocking directorate. The Soviet Communist Party has always dominated the International, to such an extent that changes in the leadership in Russia are quickly reflected in changes in the personnel of the satellite Communist parties.

Moreover, the Soviet Government keeps the closest and most suspicious watch on all foreign organizations in Russia. It is laughable to imagine that the Communist International could have maintained headquarters in Moscow for five days, much less for the quarter of a century of its formal existence, if the Soviet Government had not possessed the fullest knowledge of its purposes and activities, and approved them.

The formal self-dissolution of the Comintern in 1943 was merely a tactical wartime move. Communist parties after 1943, as before 1943, remained obedient tools for the promotion of Soviet foreign policy.

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International Communism has not been an unsuccessful conspiracy. The time has long passed when it could be suggested with any plausibility that Communism is merely an internal affair of the Russian people. Moscow-trained Communists are in full control of the governments of Poland, Rumania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Albania; of the civil administration in Soviet-occupied areas of Germany and Austria. The issue over Tito in Yugoslavia is primarily a question of whether the local puppet shall have any autonomy in matters of policy.

Communists who look to Moscow for inspiration and direction are in control of an increasing part of China, of the northern part of Korea, and are burrowing with considerable success in the socially volcanic soil of Malaya and Burma, Indo-China and Indonesia. While the Communist parties in France and Italy have been checked in recent months, they have by no means been eliminated as a source of possible civil war.

International Communism is a conspiracy that touches vital United States interests in the American hemisphere. The Communist spy ring in Canada was a threat to North American defense and we are now belatedly learning about some of its ramifications within our borders. Communists had a hand in the Bogota riots of last April and in the civil war in Costa Rica. Both Colombia and Costa Rica are uncomfortably close to the Panama Canal.

In view of these circumstances there has been a very natural and reasonable desire to "do something" about this threat to American national integrity and security. The pre-Convention debate between Governor Dewey and ex-Governor Stassen about the desirability of outlawing the Communist Party; the passage of the Mundt-Nixon bill by the House of Representatives; the investigations of the Un-American Activities Committee -- all these reflect preoccupation and concern with the issue. The recently adopted Republican platform contains the following:

> "We pledge a vigorous enforcement of existing laws against Communists and enactment of such new legislation as may be necessary to expose the treasonable activities of Communists and defeat their objective of establishing here a Godless dictatorship controlled from abroad."

The element of schizophrenia in the American reaction to the Communist challenge is easy to understand. The average American is resentful and alarmed about conspiratorial methods of fifth column infiltration. At the same time he is deeply and instinctively averse to tampering with constitutional guaranties of civil liberty. We have seen the pattern of governmental thought control in Russia, in Germany and in many smaller countries, and we certainly do not want to adopt it.

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Nevertheless, those who shout "Fascism", "witch hunt", "police State", at every attempt to deal with, or even to point out the danger of Communist infiltration into American public life, overlook three important points. The first is that the Communist conspiracy is real. The second is that conditions in the United States, where the rule of law prevails and the writ of habeas corpus runs, do not bear the slightest similarity to conditions under Communism and Fascism.

The third, and perhaps the most important point, is that there has been no tendency toward hysterical persecution of radical opinion in general, such as there was after the First World War. Socialists, Trotskyists, Socialist Laborites, and other groups which claim to be more "left" than the Stalinite Communists, have not been molested. What disturbs American public opinion is not the holding of unorthodox social and economic views. It is the close tie-up between Communists and Communist-dominated "front" organizations and the aggressive, anti-American policy of a powerful foreign State, the Soviet Union.

III

The Mundt-Nixon bill, officially entitled the Subversive Activities Control Act, has been the most serious legislative attempt to deal with the conspiratorial aspects of Communism without penalizing free expression of opinion. The bill was the result of investigations carried out by the Committee on Un-American Activities. It was passed by the House of Representatives by a large majority, but did not reach a vote in the Senate. This measure did not specifically outlaw the Communist Party. It did, however, impose disabilities on members of Communist organizations, making it illegal for such members to hold non-elective Federal office and denying them passports for foreign travel.

The Mundt-Nixon bill would have made it illegal, under penalty of fine and imprisonment, to attempt to establish in the United States a foreign-controlled totalitarian dictatorship. It would have eliminated the secrecy which surrounds Communist political organizations and would have given unwelcome publicity to the officers of Communist-front organizations. Such organizations, to be designated by the Attorney General, but with the right of appeal to the Court of Appeals of the District of Columbia, would only be permitted to send out literature under the heading: "Disseminated by a Communist organization."

The purpose of the bill, to bring Communist propaganda into the broad daylight of publicity, is certainly desirable. It is a matter of common knowledge that the Communist Party in America, as in other countries, is surrounded by a fringe of "front" organizations, all faithfully following every twist in the devious Party line, all professing to be "liberal", "democratic", "anti-Fascist", etc. Some naive and

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well-meaning individuals are taken in by these numerous false faces. If they could be stripped off it would be a protection -- a sort of Pure Food and Drugs Act -- for the politically innocent.

However, it seems questionable whether the Mundt-Nixon bill would survive a court test of Constitutionality and still more doubtful whether it would prove practically enforceable. What a student of politics may know to be true cannot always be demonstrated in a court of law. Communists in America, as elsewhere, are apt pupils of Lenin's injunction: "It is necessary . . . to use any ruse, cunning, unlawful method, evasion, concealment of truth." Communist programs are interlarded with hypocritical professions of devotion to democracy which an unsophisticated judge or jury might take seriously. Moscow's technique of controlling foreign Communist groups is devious and remote.

IV

It would probably be impossible to prevent or even fully to expose Communist activity without suspending the Bill of Rights -- too high a price to pay for the end in view. But this does not mean that the American people are helpless against totalitarian conspirators.

For protection against major ventures in espionage and sabotage we must rely mainly on the FBI and the Intelligence services. Only a doctrinaire fanatic would maintain that individuals who seek to destroy our form of government are entitled to employment in strategic government posts. Loyalty should certainly be an essential qualification here.

Much of the Communist infiltration that has taken place in Washington could have been avoided by a higher standard of intelligence in personnel selection. To give one example of many, three individuals who were engaged by the OWI to broadcast to Poland during the war are now in Poland blackguarding the United States to the best of their ability. They never belonged on a payroll met by American taxpayers.

Intelligent, discriminating "red-baiting" should also be regarded in the light of the obligations of good citizenship. When an individual finds that some committee of his church, or some forum or research organization to which he belongs, is consciously or unconsciously used as a conveyor belt for Moscow propaganda he should protest vigorously and consistently. A steady play of the spotlight of accurate publicity on Communist and Communist-front organizations would soon reduce our fifth column problem to far less dangerous proportions.

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Not Merely Gossip *A Supplement to* Human Events August 11, 1948

By Frank C. Hanighen

Washington observers of foreign affairs this week are asking the following question: Does the veil of secrecy around the Moscow conferences conceal a shroud of appeasement? Diplomatic circles speculate that Moscow is asking for (1) extension of the Marshall Plan to the Russian satellite States, under Russian supervision; and (2) a Russian share in control of the Ruhr. In the press, it is suggested that Russia also demands delay in the establishment of German self-government in the Western zones. And there are rumors that the Western Powers contemplate resumption of deliveries of German dismantled plants to Russia in return for concessions affecting the Berlin situation.

The best, authenticated report this column has received on the Moscow negotiations concerns this crucial Berlin situation. According to this report, the three Western Powers have offered to withdraw the new Western currency from all of Berlin, if Moscow will lift the blockade of the former German capital. In the short run, it is argued, such an agreement would be widely interpreted in Europe as a Russian retreat in the face of the effectiveness of the Allied air lift. In the long run, however, (over the next six months) the Soviet control of the currency would lead to Soviet financial and economic control of all Berlin -- and with it de facto political control. By next spring, at the latest, Soviet Russia would be in a position to exert another squeeze on what remained of Allied power in Berlin.

The Soviet Government, it is claimed, gave such a favorable reception to this offer that both in the Allied GHQ in Berlin and in some official circles in Washington, it was regarded as virtually accepted. But apparently Moscow stalled. It seems likely that Moscow is seeking agreement on a wider scale, involving all of Germany if not Europe. In any case, observers warn that any resultant pact will involve concessions which might well be considered appeasement of Soviet Russia.

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The political situations in the United States and France present an interesting study in contrasts. In the United States, a New Deal executive offers a collectivist program to a highly resistant legislature. In France, a conservative executive seeks approval for "free economy" measures from a reluctant Assembly. The political considerations of the American executive are too obvious to warrant discussion. It should be explained, however, that in France the executive is impeded in its course by the Socialist Party; the Socialist votes in the Assembly constitute a margin of life or death for the Government.

It is an interesting commentary that the head of this Government, Premier Andre Marie, is a member of the Radical Socialist Party. For a long time it has been a byword that this Party is neither radical nor socialist -- the title is a holdover from a different political epoch. Today, the Party is correctly described "moderate conservative". The fact that France now is trying a "moderate conservative" government to straighten out its tangled economic situation should provide a lesson to the American citizen harking to the diverse electoral appeals in this year's campaign. France, which experimented with nationalization, controls and other socialistic measures after the Liberation, has now found them very much wanting; and is now struggling to return to a free economy as a solution for its troubles.

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The current expose of Communists in the Government has given added circulation to a rumor that the Senate may set up an Un-American Activities Committee, similar to that in the House. Proponents argue that such a Senate body would ensure greater

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program and laid the blame for present conditions on the Administration. There is no doubt that Eccles nurses a grudge because Truman demoted him from the top position on the Board; but it is also clear that Eccles wants to justify his record with respect to credit restriction. Since Eccles served the Democratic Party so long and faithfully, his statements during the past week have worked irreparable damage to Truman's efforts to regain popular favor by exploiting the inflation issue. The President received another blow on August 1 when former Commissioner of Education Studebaker revealed that his efforts to combat Communism in the schools were hampered by the Administration. Studebaker had resigned on July 16.

These developments are symptomatic of a dissolving Executive. Roosevelt would have kept such figures as Eccles faithful by offering them another job. Today, with Truman's defeat virtually certain, such a quid pro quo has little attraction. There may be other resignations, other revelations by retiring officials, and acts of outright political revenge. The climate of defeat nurtures such growths.

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Obiter Dicta. At the end of the Democratic Convention, James Roosevelt met President Truman. The President expressed his disappointment that the son of F.D.R. had opposed him. "How could you have done it, Jimmy?" asked the President. "After all, your father chose me to be his successor, to be his running mate in 1944." "Yes", replied Jimmy smiling. "But my father also chose Henry Wallace in 1940."

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Told You So Department. This week's avalanche of charges concerning alleged fifth columnists in the Government prompted us to dig out of the back numbers our early reports on this subject. The first spadeful was dated February 13, 1946. This item in Not Merely Gossip stated that Premier Mackenzie King "recently paid an unpublicized visit to President Truman and gave the latter important data about the activities of the Russian Intelligence Service on this Continent. . . . [and] a list of names of Russian agents who had been planted in the Canadian and United States governments -- in the latter case holding key positions in State, War and other departments." On March 20, 1946, this column referred again to the list and reported that "one assistant Secretary of State has promised that several of these individuals will be dismissed from the Department within a few days and asked Capitol Hill not to raise a row". And on June 26, 1946, we recurred to the subject.

While we were leafing through early numbers of HUMAN EVENTS in this congenial research, we came upon another item, a warning confirmed the other day by a State Department official's public testimony that the UN serves as a cover for foreign espionage. The item, of February 27, 1946, was a statement from a former Intelligence officer protesting selection of the UN site in the Connecticut-New York area: "Such a foreign enclave so located makes our counter-intelligence surveillance of its residents almost impossible in peace, not to mention war. Why the Army and Navy permitted this without protest is difficult to conceive. Perhaps they did protest but were overruled. I consider the attitude and procedure of the Federal Government reprehensible and un-American."

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Briefs ---- Secretary Forrestal has moved to end the lack of co-ordination of the three arms of national defense. Pentagon sources report that, in the past week, Forrestal issued a peremptory order to the Joint Chiefs either to solve the budget problem, or to submit separate service recommendations within a month. This order, it is emphasized, assumes far more importance than is readily visible to those unfamiliar with the Department's problems. On some highly important and contentious

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questions, decisions have not been reached because of the unanimity requirement. On lesser matters, the services made deals and generally produced bland compromises. With separate recommendations on all questions, the Secretary may be expected to make vital decisions on such matters as the number of personnel, the role of the air force and division of budgetary allowances.

---- In some Republican circles, there are proposals that Dewey (if elected) should retain Forrestal as Secretary of Defense, at least for a year. The critical international situation and the necessity of solving the defense unification problem are mentioned as compelling reasons for keeping Forrestal. The fact that New Deal elements in the Truman Administration have been carrying on a cabal against the former Dillon, Reed partner has not hurt the developing sentiment for him among these Republicans.

---- Private reports from London, where the Western Union military staff committee has been conferring, say that Western Union nations want to tap U. S. arms reserves. The committee claims that the U. S. Army has ample weapons to equip a substantial number of European divisions, even after all new U. S. draftees are armed. It is recognized, however, that Congressional action would be necessary for approval of such a deal. The arms mentioned are not "surplus" (which could be sold legally) but "reserves". Some lend-lease form of transaction is what the Western Union military men desire. Pentagon quarters, however, decline to comment.

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It seems generally agreed that the force which turned Marshal Tito against the pretensions of the Cominform was the Yugoslav peasantry. The Communist organization was pressing Tito to collectivize agriculture. But the dictator recognized the impossibility of such a policy in his country, at least now -- so tenaciously does the Yugoslav peasant defend his sovereignty over his little farm. The "power of the peasant" certainly stands as a sturdy obstacle in the path of Communism, in Europe today. Is it also a force for peace? This is a question which Herbert Read, in the course of an article in the Adelphi (July-September) answers in the affirmative.

"The peasant", remarks Mr. Read, "is not aggressive, not, at least, in the corporate nationalistic sense which involves men in war. And yet we cannot assume that his infantile experiences differ in any important respects from those of the town-bred proletarian or intellectual, who is such a vociferous militarist when war breaks out. We must conclude, therefore, that there is some factor in the peasant's upbringing, environment, or daily experience which discharges his aggressive impulses, which leaves him in a pacific state of mind. . . . the aggressive impulses of the peasant are discharged against a permanent enemy which we generally call Nature. The struggle against weather, against erosion, against weeds, is a struggle which fully engages whatever death instincts the average human being is endowed with."

Then in tribute to that "peasant civilization" about which our contributor, Henry Beston, has written so understandingly, Mr. Read says: "It is not, however, the hardness, the harshness, the exhausting nature of the peasant's work that makes him a man indifferent to war. It is something more profound: an active mingling of his body and spirit with the diurnal processes of the natural world. Birth, copulation and death are not mysteries to him in the sense that they are not secret events -- they are the daily substance of his life, the events which give rhythm to his existence. Man is, in a real sense, a part of the cosmic process --

'Man moulded with Earth
Like Clay uprisen . . .'

An ingrained sense of what one might call Mother Earth gives to the peasant a sense of security which is unknown to the city-dweller, whose existence depends on a cash-nexus."

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Book Events

Existentialism: A Theory of Man, by Ralph Harper. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press. $3.00. Existentialism: Degradation of Man's Soul, by Guido de Ruggiero. New York: Social Science Publishers. $2.50. Reviewed by J. M. Lalley.

More than a dozen years ago, Professor Johan Huizinga, the celebrated historian of the Middle Ages, prophesied that the coming craze among the educated and almost educated would be something called Existentialism. "I can see it", he said, "springing up on all sides; before very long it will have landed with the public at large. When, in order to convince one's audience of profundity one has said 'dynamic' long enough, it will then be 'existential'." The new vocabulary reached these United States somewhat belatedly a couple of years ago, largely through the secularist version of Existentialism popularized by the French novelist, Jean-Paul Sartre; presently terms like Angst, Sorge, Shipwreck and Inwardness were bouncing around the smarter dinner tables and the pages of the highbrow quarterlies, like expertly batted celluloid balls.

The truth is, of course, that, apart from its systematization at the hands of German professionals like Heidegger and Jaspers, Existentialism is not a new creed but a very old one. Its basic doctrine can be found in writers as dissimilar and as distant in time as Tertullian, Pascal, and the late Miguel de Unamuno, who was perhaps their most brilliant modern expositor. On the psychological side, Existentialism results from the sense of the total isolation of the human soul; on the metaphysical side, it results from a conviction of the futility of all human reason. It is, in other words, a kind of glorified solipsism, arising out of the crisis within the soul, when a man is brought face to face with the fact of his own existence. At that point he is obliged to choose between the alternatives expressed in the now famous formula of Kierkegaard, Either/Or: he can narcotize his fears with the superstitions of speculative reasoning or he can surrender himself to that longing and despair which makes possible his rescue by faith or, as some have it, by "transcendence". Existentialism, then, where it finds a religious interpretation, is another phase of the "crisis theology" which in all ages has had a powerful attraction for certain minds, but which in an age of intellectual anarchy like our own has a much broader appeal. It amounts, in effect, to a repudiation of the intellect, and something of its present popularity must be ascribed to the reaction to the complacent optimism of Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century rationalists. It is a refuge of a sort for those made homeless by the destruction of the cozy mechanistic universe and rendered inconsolable by the shattering of the illusion of progress. If it is no longer possible to hope, it is at least possible to endure what must be endured, and even to find a certain pride in the courage which is required to contemplate the knowledge of one's utter unimportance and impotence. In a Christian context, of course, existentialism may produce the heroic evangelicalism of Barth and Niemoeller; but divorced from religion, as for example in Sartre, it seems by no means incompatible with the philosophy of the totalitarian Society, since any doctrine of human rights and dignity can rest in the last analysis only on the concept of man as a rational creature.

Together, these two books -- one by a convert full of ardor, and one by an intractable adversary -- afford a pretty complete introduction to the existentialist philosophy. Mr. Harper covers some lesser known developments of the movement, such as the efforts of certain Catholic writers like the Jesuits Rousselot and D'Arcy, to find a nexus between religious Existentialism and the natural theology of St. Thomas Aquinas. But I think Signor Ruggiero, a philosophic idealist of the school of Croce, has said the last word when he describes the movement as the ultimate blind alley of romanticism.

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